

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. **(Currently Amended)** ~~In a network environment having a plurality of users each having a network-enabled calendar,~~ A method of hooking up at least two users using a hook-
5 up assistant (HUA), wherein said users are connected in a network environment having a plurality of users, and wherein each of said users has a network-enabled calendar, said method ~~the improvement~~ comprising:

~~a computer-implemented hook-up assistant (HUA) capable of~~

determining an appropriate time when at least two people of said users to be hooked

10 up will be available to participate in an event or activity;

scheduling said event or activity at said appropriate time on respective calendars of said at least two people; and

initiating said event or activity substantially at said appropriate time, wherein said determining, scheduling, and initiating are accomplished by said HUA; and

15 automatically activating said HUA in response to an incomplete telephone call made by a first of said at least two people to a second of said at least two people.

2. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~ method according to claim 1, wherein said HUA comprises preferences and constraints of one of said at least two people;

20 and wherein

said appropriate time is determined consistent with said preferences and constraints.

3. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~ method according to claim 1, wherein said HUA comprises

privileges to access and alter said respective calendars of said at least two people, and

means for accessing and altering said respective calendars of said at least two people according to said privileges.

5

4. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 1, further comprising:

~~means for~~ activating said HUA in response to a request from one of said at least two people.

10

5. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 4, wherein said ~~means for~~ activating further comprises

~~means for~~ interacting with said one of said at least two people; and

~~means for~~ proposing said event or activity based on inputs obtained during

15

said interaction.

6. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 4, wherein said ~~means for~~ activating further comprises

~~means for~~ interacting with said one of said at least two people to solicit yes or

20

no answers; and

~~means for~~ proposing said event or activity based on said answers.

7. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 1, further comprising:

~~means for~~ activating said HUA in response to a request referring to a previous event or activity with desired changes thereto.

8. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~ method according to claim 4 or 7, wherein

5 said request is in a form of spoken or manually entered natural language, in a form of a computer language, or in a form of an electronic signal.

9. **(Canceled)**

10. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~ method according to claim 9, wherein

said incomplete telephone call is indicated by a busy signal, an answering machine, a voicemail service, a computerized agent, a human assistant, a receptionist, a secretary, an inanimate entity, or an animate entity other than said second of said at least two people.

11. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~ method according to claim 1, further comprising: wherein

~~said HUA comprises means for~~ exchanging data related to said respective calendars ~~essentially~~ regardless of physical and virtual boundaries that include distance, language, platforms, operating systems, and network protocols, wherein said exchanging is
20 accomplished by said HUA.

12. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~ method according to claim 11, wherein

said ~~means for~~ exchanging data comprises ~~is capable of~~ encoding a cross-domain structured syntax language including hypertext markup language (HTML), eXtensible

HTML (XHTML), eXtensible markup language (XML), XML document type definition (DTD), and XML schema.

13. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 1, further
5 comprising: wherein

~~said HUA comprises means for~~ assuring said at least two people be able to participate
in said event or activity at said appropriate time.

14. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 13, wherein

10 ~~said means for~~ assuring comprises

~~means for~~ determining whether said at least two people will have, at said
appropriate time, access to suitable communication means that will be available for
use in said event or activity; and

~~means for~~ reminding said at least two people about said event or activity.

15. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 14, wherein

said suitable communication means include wired and wireless communication
devices, resources, web-based services, cellular phones, telephones, video phones, Internet-
enabled phones, Internet-enabled input devices, instant messaging, virtual meeting places,
20 online chat rooms, online games, Multi-User Dungeons (MUDs), MUD Object Oriented sites
(MOOs), personal digital assistant (PDA), and World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)
compliant multimodal interaction means.

16. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 1, wherein

said event or activity is a phone conversation, a business meeting, a family gathering, or a social engagement.

17. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~ method according to claim 1, further
5 comprising: wherein

~~said HUA comprises means for~~ securing reservations necessary to realize said event or activity for said at least two people.

18. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~ method according to claim 1, wherein

10 said event or activity requires admission tickets, tokens, or permits; and wherein

said HUA comprises means for purchasing said admission tickets, tokens, or permits for said at least two people to attend said event or activity.

19. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~ method according to claim 1, wherein

15 said event or activity requires invitations; and wherein

said HUA comprises means for obtaining invitations for said at least two people to attend said event or activity.

20. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~ method according to claim 1, wherein

20 said appropriate time or said event or activity is found infeasible or otherwise undesirable,

said HUA comprises means for proposing at least one alternative.

21. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 1, further comprising wherein

~~said HUA is capable of~~ proposing changes in prior commitments on said respective calendars when a new request can only be desirably satisfied by impinging on said prior commitments.

22. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 21, further comprising wherein

~~said HUA is capable of~~ altering said prior commitments in accordance with proper privileges predetermined or obtained in real time.

23. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 21 or 22, wherein

said HUA is enabled to determine independently how said prior commitments can be altered; and wherein

said HUA automatically alters said prior commitments on said respective calendars to satisfy said new request and promptly notifies those affected by said alteration.

24. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 23, wherein

said alteration is selected from the group consisting of rescheduling said prior commitments, replacing said prior commitments with alternatives, and a combination thereof.

25. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 1, further comprising:

~~means~~ for activating said HUA, or invoking one or more functions thereof, in response to a triggering mechanism selected from the group consisting of a tone, a button, a key, a sound, a spoken word, a sequence of tones, a sequence of buttons, a sequence of keys, a sequence of sounds, a sequence of spoken words, and a combination thereof.

26. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 25, wherein

said HUA automatically contacts or automatically schedules to contact a person, an agent of said person, or a HUA of said person to schedule a hook-up event to bring its user and said person together.

27. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 26, wherein said contact is realized by phone, text message, voice message, or email.

28. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 26, wherein said ~~schedules to~~ scheduled contact is effected periodically until a certain criterion is satisfied.

29. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~method according to claim 1, wherein ~~further comprising:~~

~~a computer product for implementing~~ said HUA can be implemented as a computer product, wherein the computer product comprises ~~comprising~~ a computer readable medium

carrying computer-executable instructions implementing a plurality of functions of said HUA.

30. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~ method according to claim 29, wherein

5 said computer product is embodied in a phone, a stand-alone network-enabled device, a client, a server, or a combination thereof.

31. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~improvement~~ method according to claim 29, wherein

said computer product is implemented as part of an instant messaging system.

10 32-49. **(Canceled)**

50. **(New)** The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

15 tentatively committing said at least two people to said event or activity by indicating said event or activity on said calendar of one or more of said at least two people participating in said event or activity.

51. **(New)** A method of heuristically hooking up at least two users using a computer-

implemented hook-up assistant (HUA), wherein said users are connected in a network

20 environment having a plurality of users, said method comprising:

providing a calendar for one or more of said users;

providing a scheduling function to allow a first of said users to tentatively schedule an appropriate time for an event or activity with a second of said users, wherein said tentatively

scheduled event or activity is on said calendar of said first user, and wherein said scheduling is based on one or more heuristics; and

initiating said event or activity substantially at said appropriate time.

5 52. **(New)** The method according to claim 51, further comprising automatically activating said HUA in response to an incomplete telephone call made by said first user to said second user.

10 53. **(New)** The method according to claim 51, wherein said heuristics comprise a time delay or a time interval.

15 54. **(New)** The method according to claim 51, further comprising allowing said second user to confirm availability at said tentatively scheduled time or cancel said scheduled event or activity.

55. **(New)** The method according to claim 54, wherein said second user can reschedule said event or activity, and wherein said rescheduling is based on one or more heuristics.

20 56. **(New)** The method according to claim 51, wherein said tentatively scheduled event or activity is communicated to said second user.

57. **(New)** The method according to claim 56, wherein said tentatively scheduled event or activity is communicated to said second user with a phone message, a text message, a voice message, or an email.

58. (New) The method according to claim 56, wherein said tentatively scheduled event or activity is on said calendar of said second user.